

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

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R 181439Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 2715

INFO SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS MANAMA 049

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : MARR, BA

SUBJECT : BAHRAINI REQUEST FOR LCVPS

REF : MANAMA 024

1. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED A LETTER FROM CHIEF OF STAFF OF BAHRAIN DEFENSE FORCE (BDF), OPERATIVE PART OF WHICH IS AS FOLLOWS: QTE THERE HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE THE NEED OF SIX TO TWELVE SUITABLE WATER TRANSPORTS (FYI: MEANING BOATS CAPABLE OF CARRYING HUMAN AND OTHER CARGO END FYI) FOR RELIEF OPERATIONS BETWEEN THE ISLANDS OF BAHRAIN. WE HAVE STUDIED VARIOUS CATALOGUES AND BROCHURES BUT HAVE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THE L.C.V.P.'S CURRENTLY BEING USED BY THE U.S. NAVY IDEALLY MEET OUR REQUIREMENTS. WE SHALL BE GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD HELP US IN MEETING THIS IMPORTANT REQUIREMENT THROUGH U.S. NAVY SOURCES ON A PRIORITY BASIS. END QTE

2. SUBSEQUENT TO RECEIPT OF THE LETTER, EMBASSY OFFICER AND NAVY CAPTAIN (WHO IS EXPERT IN AMPHIBIOUS MATTERS) HAVE DISCUSSED THE REQUEST WITH CHIEF OF STAFF. ALTHOUGH THE PURPOSE OF THE BOATS STILL SEEMS A LITTLE FUZZY TO US, CHIEF OF STAFF STATES THAT THE BDF WANTS TO DEVELOP A CAPABILITY, APART FROM THAT OF THE COAST GUARD, TO ASSIST RELIEF OPERATIONS IN OUTLYING ISLANDS DURING "EMERGENCIES" SUCH AS FLOODS AND WATER SCARCITY. BDF HAD CONSULTED CATALOGS AND JANE'S FIGHTING SHIPS AND DECIDED THAT LCVPS WOULD BEST FIT ITS NEEDS. JUDGEMENT OF NAVAL UNCLASSIFIED

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CAPTAIN WAS THAT LCVPS COULD MEET THESE NEEDS AS WELL AS

SERVE TRADITIONAL AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT PURPOSES. (AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: EVEN IF LCVP COULD MEET THESE ESSENTIALLY CIVILIAN NEEDS, WE ARE NOT AUTOMATICALLY PERSUADED IT IS THE CRAFT THAT COULD BEST MEET SUCH NEEDS AND HENCE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE EXPERT SUGGESTIONS OF ALTERNATIVE U.S.-MANUFACTURED CRAFTS.)

3. ACTION REQUESTED: ALTHOUGH THE REQUEST IS INFORMAL (REFTEL), WE WOULD BE APPRECIATIVE OF INFORMATION INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING: (A) WHETHER LCVP'S ARE AVAILABLE TO BDF EITHER THROUGH COMMERCIAL CHANNELS OR THROUGH FMS SALES CASE; (B) IF AVAILABLE, IN WHAT TIME FRAME AND AT WHAT COST; (C) WHETHER DEPARTMENT ANTICIPATES ANY REALISTIC AND SIGNIFICANT POLICY PROBLEMS (I.E., "OFFENSIVE WEAPON IN GULF") IN U.S. SALE OF LCVP'S TO BDF (EMBASSY ASSUMES THERE IS NO PROBLEM.)
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